



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Policy Manual

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Issuance:	37-A	School Vehicle Transportation – Inspections and Vehicle Use	

Purpose:

This issuance establishes policy and procedure for school vehicles operated by the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Office of Education (OOE).

Authority:

- N.J.S.A. 18A:39-1 et seq.
- NJAC 6A:27-1 et seq.

Policy:

A) School Vehicles and Inspections

- 1) The DCF OOE school vehicles shall comply with all New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (NJMVC) laws and regulations for the manufacture of school vehicles.
- 2) Any school vehicle owned or leased by the DCF OOE must be registered with the NJMVC and issued a current NJMVC school vehicle inspection sticker prior to use for transportation of students.

B) Vehicle Use

- 1) Only eligible students, infants, toddlers, authorized school personnel, adults serving as chaperones, and persons stipulated in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) shall be transported on a DCF OOE school vehicle.

- 2) The number of passengers on a school vehicle shall not exceed the vehicle's designated passenger capacity as established by the manufacturer.

Procedures:

1) Inspections of DCF school vehicles

- a) The Head Bus Driver or designee and the Regional Transportation Coordinator shall assure that each DCF OOE school vehicle is inspected two times a year by the NJMVC inspectors. Scheduled inspections shall be performed on-site or at an approved designated service station.
- b) The NJMVC may, at any time, perform inspections of school vehicles in operation on State of New Jersey roads or at the owner's place of business.
- c) The Head Bus Driver or designee shall forward the invoice for the inspection to the Regional Transportation Coordinator.
- d) The Head Bus Driver or designee shall keep all records of inspection and maintenance reports for the life of the vehicle. Such reports shall follow the vehicle and be made available for review by the NJMVC.
- e) The Head Bus Driver or designee shall complete, [OOE Policy 37-A ATT1](#), **Monthly Vehicle/Energy Report** and submit this to the OOE Regional Transportation Coordinator by the fifth (5th) day of each month for the previous month's data.
- f) Drivers shall conduct a daily pre-trip warm-up and operating inspection of the school vehicles, utilizing the [NJMVC Drivers Vehicle Inspection Report](#) to verify the proper working condition of all equipment. This form shall be given to the Head Bus Driver or designee at the end of each working shift and signed by the Head Bus Driver or designee daily.
- g) A detected malfunction shall be recorded on the [OOE Policy 37-A ATT2](#), **School Vehicle Maintenance Report** and reported to the Head Bus Driver or designee immediately for their decision regarding the scheduling of maintenance and correction prior to or following the completion of the vehicle run.

2) Transportation on a DCF school vehicle

- a) Any exception to the provision of the Vehicle Use Policy Statement requires the expressed approval of the Director, OOE.
- b) Any infant or toddler shall be transported to a Regional School (RS) only if their student-parent is present in the vehicle.
- c) The number of students and infants assigned to a seating location shall not exceed the number of seat belts or wheelchair harnesses.

- d) Each student and staff sitting in a vehicle seat shall be secured with an approved seat belt.
- e) Each student sitting in a wheelchair shall be secured with a lap and torso safety belt and an approved wheelchair restraint system.
- f) The appropriate Child Safety Restraint System (CSRS) shall be used to transport infants, toddlers, and students with disabilities for whom such a system must be utilized.
- g) A child safety restraint system shall not be installed on a seat next to an emergency door or window.
- h) There shall be no standees.
- i) When there are five passengers in wheelchairs on a vehicle equipped with a wheelchair lift, there shall be no more than three ambulatory passengers.

3) Items on a DCF school vehicle

- a) The ES shall determine the types of items acceptable and appropriate for passengers to bring on the school vehicle.
- b) It is prohibited to use a DCF OOE school vehicle to transport items, other than those addressed in this policy, unless prior approval had been given by the ES. In every situation, these items are to be appropriate, legal, and the customary possession of a student or staff person.
- c) The Driver and Escort shall ensure that all appropriate loose or moveable items on the school vehicle be secured before the school vehicle moves and there are no objects obstructing the aisles and exits.

4) Support Equipment and Accessories

- a) Portable equipment such as crutches, walkers, oxygen tanks, and ventilators shall be securely fastened at a mounting location able to withstand a pulling force of five times the weight of the item or otherwise retained in an enclosed and latched compartment.
- b) The school vehicle shall contain a belt cutter for use in emergencies. The belt cutter shall be designed to prevent injuries during use and secured in a safe location.

Key Terms (Definitions):

- Eligible Student means an individual, age 3 through 21 years, who is enrolled in a DCF Regional School or affiliated program.
- Eligible Infant or Toddler means a student-parent's child attending a licensed childcare center provided at a DCF Regional School.

Forms and Attachments:

- [OOE Policy 37-A ATT1](#), **Monthly Vehicle/Energy Report**
- [OOE Policy 37-A ATT2](#), **School Vehicle Maintenance Report**
- [NJMVC Drivers Vehicle Inspection Report](#)

Policy History:

- Revised 9/8/2020
- Revised 5/31/2006
- Created 1/6/1997